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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 004920

SIPDIS

NEA/I-ECON FOR JOSH VOLZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/2015

TAGS: [AINF](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: MFA RESPONDS TO OIL-FOR-FOOD DEMARCHES

REF: A) STATE 219153 B) STATE 213760

Classified By: Economic Minister Counselor Tom Delare for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: In a December 8 meeting with Econoff, Ambassador Srood R. Najib of the MFA, agreed to USG requests for: 1) declassification of certain Oil-for-Food (OFF) documents for use by the Department of Justice (DOJ), and 2) Iraqi funding of the U.N. OFF Independent Inquiry Committee (IIC). End summary.

2. (C) On December 8, Econoff met with Ambassador Srood R. Najib, head of the MFA's International Organization and Multilateral Cooperation Department to discuss two recent OFF requests submitted to the MFA by the Embassy via diplomatic note. The first request was for permission to declassify two OFF documents for dissemination outside the USG, per the request of the DOJ and the U.S. Attorney's office for the Southern District of New York (SDNY) (ref A). SDNY intends to use these documents in ongoing OFF investigations and prosecutions.

3. (C) Najib was quite knowledgeable of OFF issues having just returned from two months at Iraq's U.N. mission in New York. He immediately gave his verbal permission for the documents to be declassified, provided any illicit funds or "kickbacks" uncovered in the course of the investigation be returned to the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI). He said that he would send an official written reply to this effect in response to our diplomatic note.

4. (C) Najib was likewise well-briefed about our other OFF request that the GOI continue funding the U.N. IIC chaired by Paul Volcker for an additional three to six months beyond its December 31, 2005 expiration date (ref B). Najib agreed that funding the continued operations of the IIC is necessary to ensure the continued use of the documentary evidence it has assembled. The GOI will fund the extension, he said, or the funds will be taken from the DFI. Najib said that these instructions would be sent to Iraq's U.N. mission by week's end and that their Deputy Permanent Representative would also inform Ambassador Bolton. The GOI prefers a six-month extension.  
KHALILZAD